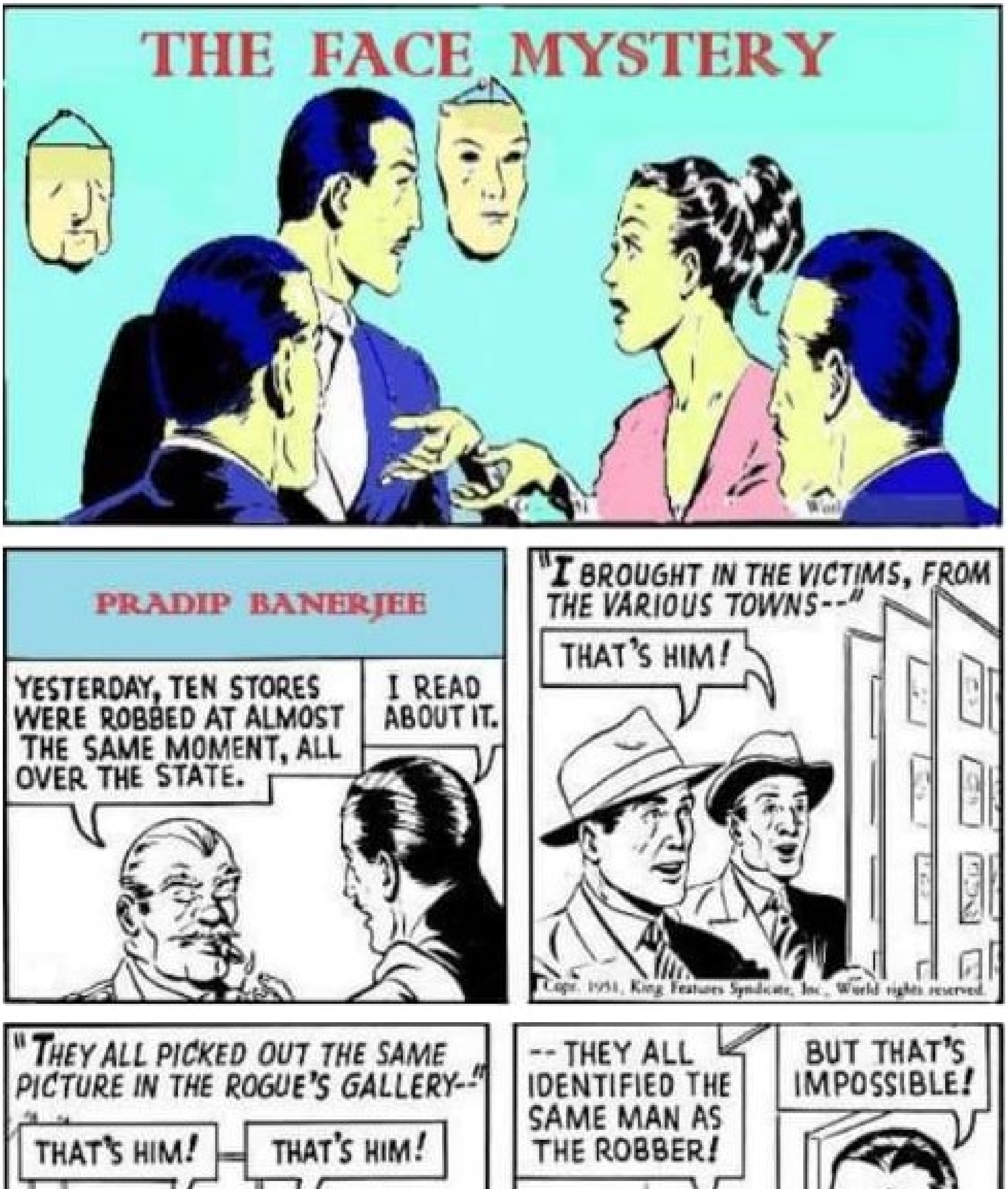
MANDRAKE
THE MAGICIAN ♣ BY- LEE FALK

THE FACE MYSTERY



COVER DESIGN AND PDF BY :- PRADIP BANERJEE


THE FACE MYSTERY
PRADIP BANERJEE
YESTERDAY, TEN STORES WERE ROBBED AT ALMOST THE SAME MOMENT, ALL OVER THE STATE.
I READ ABOUT IT.
"I BROUGHT IN THE VICTIMS, FROM THE VARIOUS TOWNS--"
THAT'S HIM!
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"THEY ALL PICKED OUT THE SAME PICTURE IN THE ROGUE'S GALLERY--"
THAT'S HIM!
THAT'S HIM!
-- THEY ALL IDENTIFIED THE SAME MAN AS THE ROBBER!
BUT THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE!


HOW COULD ONE MAN ROB TEN DIFFERENT STORES ALL OVER THE STATE--AT THE SAME TIME ?
GOOD QUESTION!
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"ALL TEN VICTIMS POSITIVELY IDENTIFIED THIS MAN!"
4650
Hmm--THAT'S A FACE THAT'S HARD TO FORGET.
WE KNOW THAT FACE VERY WELL! AS A MATTER OF FACT, THAT MAN'S BEEN IN JAIL FOR THE LAST FIVE YEARS--
--AND WHAT'S MORE--HE'S STILL IN JAIL--AT THIS VERY MOMENT.
NO!
PRADIP BANERJEE
WHAT'S UP ?
THE WARDEN'S TAKING YOU INTO TOWN, PUNCHY.
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WARDEN, ARE YOU CERTAIN THIS MAN WASN'T OUT OF HIS CELL YESTERDAY?
POSITIVE! HE'S BEEN IN SOLITARY FOR THREE DAYS.

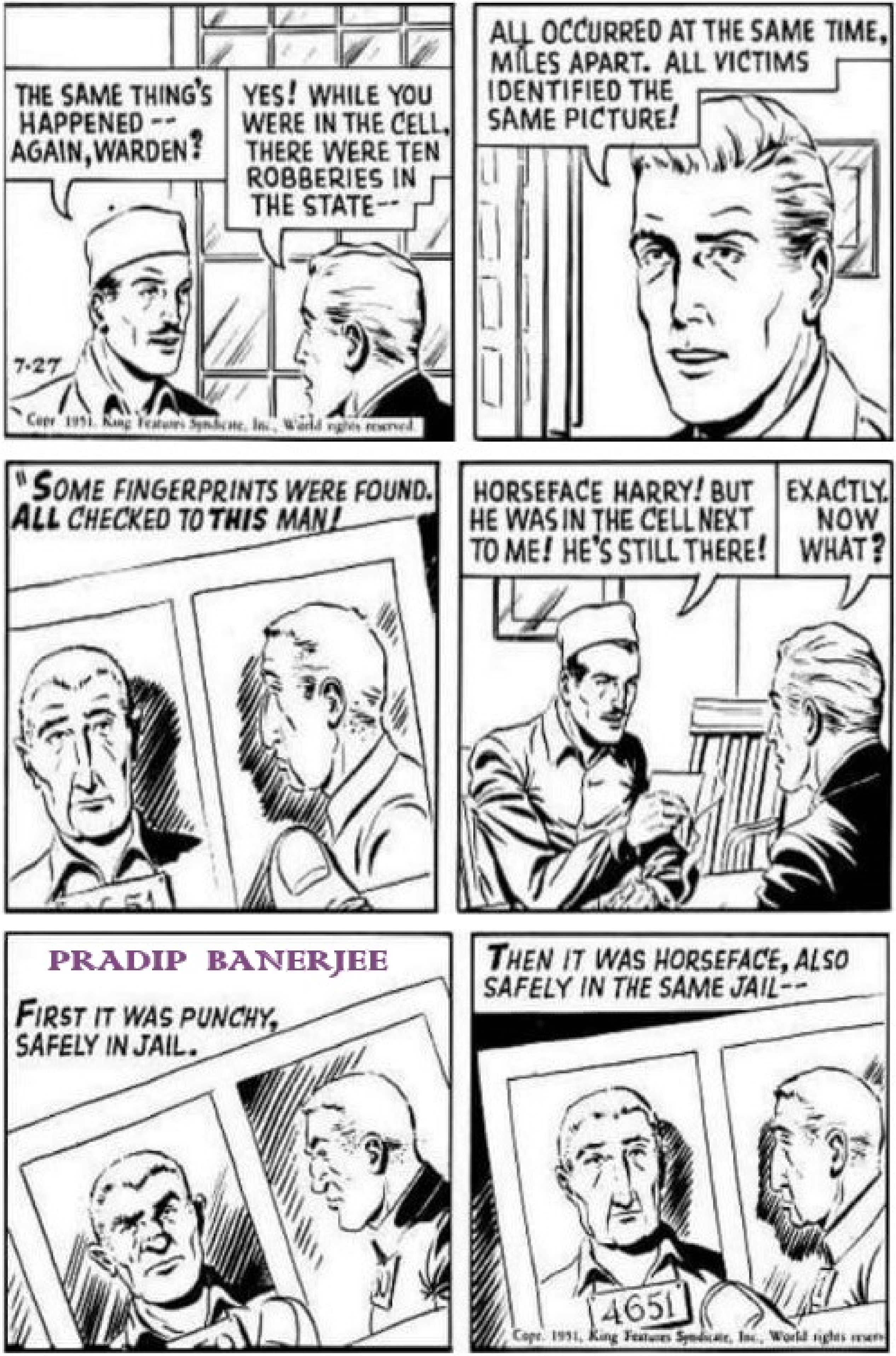

THAT'S HIM!
PRADIP BANERJEE
SEE! THEY'RE ALL SURE HE ROBBED THEM YESTERDAY-- TEN ROBBERIES --ALL OVER THE STATE-- AT THE SAME MOMENT--!
AND HE WAS IN JAIL!
7-18
THE ROBBERIES OCCURRED IN THOSE TEN PLACES AT THE SAME TIME! SOME ARE HUNDREDS OF MILES APART--
IMPOSSIBLE FOR ONE MAN TO DO THAT! YET, ALL THE VICTIMS IDENTIFIED HIM, AND HE WAS IN JAIL AT THE TIME!
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WHAT'S MORE--WE FOUND FINGER-PRINTS AT SEVERAL OF THE SPOTS. THEY WERE ALL HIS PRINTS!
WHAT? BUT HOW CAN THAT BE?
I'M ASKING YOU! THIS CASE DOESN'T NEED A COP. IT NEEDS A MAGICIAN.


LET'S USE OUR HEADS. WE KNOW ONE MAN COULDN'T COMMIT ALL THOSE ROBBERIES AT THE SAME MOMENT. IT REQUIRED A GANG.
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WE KNOW PUNCHY COULDN'T DO IT --HE WAS IN JAIL! YET ALL THE VICTIMS IDENTIFIED HIM--AND HIS FINGERPRINTS WERE FOUND AT THE PLACES.
THAT'S THE PART THAT MAKES NO SENSE--NONE OF IT MAKES ANY SENSE--
WE'LL GO DAFFY TRYING TO FIGURE THIS OUT--I'M GOING TO JAIL--
JAIL?
TO FOLLOW UP OUR ONLY CLUE IN THIS MYSTERY--PUNCHY!
PRADIP BANERJEE
I HOPE YOU CAN LEARN SOMETHING, MANDRAKE. THIS CASE IS DRIVING US CRAZY!
ME TOO! MAYBE PUNCHY'LL KNOW NOTHING. I'LL FIND OUT.
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HOW DO I LOOK, WARDEN?
RIGHT AT HOME. GOOD LUCK.


HERE COMES A NEW GUY, PUNCHY.
I HOPE THEY DON'T PUT HIM WITH ME! I GOT ENOUGH TROUBLES AL-READY!
PRADIP BANERJEE
WHATSA IDEA PUTTIN' ANOTHER GUY IN HERE? IT'S TOO SMALL FOR *ME!*
BUTTON UP, PUNCHY.
WHAT'D THEY GET YOU FOR?
NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS.
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OKAY, LET'S BOTH SHUT UP. I GOT SOME SERIOUS THINKIN' TO DO.
HE MAY KNOW THE ANSWER TO THE WHOLE MYSTERY. THE QUESTION IS--HOW TO GET IT OUT OF HIM?


P R A D I P B A N E R J E E
SAY--THIS THING'S DRIVIN' ME BATTY!
WHAT THING?
IS HE GOING TO TALK NOW?
YESTIDAY THEY TOOK ME OUTA HERE TO THE CHIEF'S OFFICE. THEY ACCUSE ME OF DOIN' TEN JOBS ALL OVER THE STATE.
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--THAT'S A LAUGH--'CAUSE HERE I AM, IN STIR. BUT HOW CAN TEN GUYS LOOK LIKE ME--AND HAVE MY SAME FINGERPRINTS TOO?
THAT'S DRIVING US ALL BATTY! BUT IS HE TELLING ALL HE KNOWS--OR LYING?
PUNCHY, WHY SHOULD THEY THINK YOU DID THOSE 'JOBS' WHILE YOU WERE IN JAIL?
'CAUSE THEY FOUND MY PRINTS-- Uhh-
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Uh--WHY YOU STARIN' AT ME?-Uhh-
RELAX--SLEEP--YOU MUST TELL ME THE TRUTH--
7-25


--YOU CANNOT LIE TO ME --WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THOSE ROBBERIES?
NUTTIN'
WHO COMMITTED THEM?
I DUNNO.
P R D I P
Uh--WHAT HAPPENED? DID I DOZE OFF? THIS THING'S GOT ME GOOFY.
ME TOO.
HEY, WILL YOUSE GUYS SHUT UP? I'M TRYIN' TO SLEEP!
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MANDRAKE SIGNALS TO THE GUARD--
DON'T MIND HORSEFACE. HE'S ALWAYS CRABBIN'.
I USED HYPNOSIS, WARDEN. PUNCHY KNOWS NOTHING--
NEVER MIND HIM! MANDRAKE, THE SAME THING'S HAPPENED ALL OVER AGAIN!


THE SAME THING'S HAPPENED -- AGAIN, WARDEN?
YES! WHILE YOU WERE IN THE CELL, THERE WERE TEN ROBBERIES IN THE STATE--
7-27
Copr. 1951, King Features Syndicate, Inc., World rights reserved
ALL OCCURRED AT THE SAME TIME, MILES APART. ALL VICTIMS IDENTIFIED THE SAME PICTURE!
"SOME FINGERPRINTS WERE FOUND. ALL CHECKED TO THIS MAN!
HORSEFACE HARRY! BUT HE WAS IN THE CELL NEXT TO ME! HE'S STILL THERE!
EXACTLY. NOW WHAT?
PRADIP BANERJEE
FIRST IT WAS PUNCHY, SAFELY IN JAIL.
THEN IT WAS HORSEFACE, ALSO SAFELY IN THE SAME JAIL--
4651
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PARDON ME WHILE I LOSE MY MIND! MEN IN JAIL JUST CAN'T COMMIT TEN CRIMES AT ONCE!
YET THE FINGER-PRINTS -- THE IDENTIFICATIONS -- ALL CHECK!
SOMEBODY'S LAUGHING AT US -- THE CLEVEREST CRIMINAL ON RECORD! YET I HAVEN'T THE SLIGHTEST IDEA WHO HE IS -- OR HOW HE'S DOING IT!
PRADIP
7-26
HOW DO YOU FELLOWS FIGURE IT? TWENTY ROBBERIES BY SOMEBODY WHO LOOKED JUST LIKE YOU -- AND LEFT YOUR FINGERPRINTS. AND BOTH OF YOU IN JAIL AT THE TIME!
IT'S GOT ME DAFFY! HOW DO YOU FIGURE IT, HORSEFACE?
YOU'RE JUST DUMB, PUNCHY.
YOU MEAN YOU KNOW HOW IT WAS DONE, HORSEFACE?
I BEEN THINKIN'. I GOT A PRETTY GOOD IDEA -- BUT I AIN'T TALKIN' -- YET.
HORSEFACE KNOWS! OUR FIRST REAL CLUE! I'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF THIS CELL INTO HIS -- WITHOUT MAKING HIM SUSPICIOUS!
7-30


'SCUSE ME--
I CAN'T TURN AROUND IN THIS PLACE WITHOUT BUMPING INTO YOU, PUNCHY.
WHAT YOU BEEFIN' ABOUT?
THIS CELL'S TOO SMALL FOR TWO MEN. I WANT TO SEE THE WARDEN.
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TELL THE WARDEN WHAT YOU THINK OF 'IM, BUDDY.
ASK HIM ABOUT MY TIME-AND-A-HALF FOR OVERTIME!
YOU THINK HORSEFACE KNOWS, MANDRAKE? YOUR PLAN IS RISKY--
THERE'S NO OTHER WAY, WARDEN! WITH LUCK, HORSEFACE'LL LEAD US TO THE CRIME RING.
7-31
NEXT:- MANDRAK'S PLAN
PRADIP
Hey! YOU KICK THAT PUNCHY'S CELL'S TOO SMALL FOR TWO OF YOU--SO THEY PUT YOU IN WITH ME--AND MY CELL'S EVEN SMALLER!
8-1
Copr. 1951, King Features Syndicate, Inc., World rights reserved.
WARDEN'S IDEA OF A JOKE. MAYBE HE'S NOT AS SMART AS HE THINKS! KNOW WHAT THIS IS, HORSEFACE?
SURE. A KEY.


IT'S THE WARDEN'S OWN MASTER KEY TO EVERY DOOR AND GATE IN THIS PRISON.
WHA-A-AT? HOW'D YOU GET IT?
TOOK IT FROM HIS DESK WHILE HE WASN'T LOOKING.
GO ON! TELL THAT TO THE BIRDS!
P R A D I P
SO YOU DON'T BELIEVE THIS IS THE WARDEN'S MASTER KEY. THE GUARD ISN'T LOOKING NOW. WATCH!
8-2
Copr 1951, King Features Syndicate, Inc., World rights reserved.
IT--IS! BUT HOW COULD YOU TAKE IT OFF'N HIS DESK, WITH-OUT THE WARDEN NOTICIN'?
I USED TO BE PRETTY GOOD AT SLEIGHT-OF-HAND, HORSEFACE.
I PALMED IT--LIKE THIS!


PRADIP BANERJEE
I'M GOING TO BREAK OUT OF THIS PRISON!
YEAH? WHAT IF YOU HAVE GOT THE MASTER KEY? YOU CAN'T JUST WALK OUT! THE GUARDS'LL SHOOT!
8-3
SO WHAT? IT'S WORTH THE CHANCE! I GO AT MIDNIGHT. I'M NOT AFRAID. ARE YOU?
AFRAID? --gulp-- ME?
TIME FOR MANDRAKE'S BREAK. I HOPE HE KNOWS WHAT HE'S DOING!
HE'S NEVER FAILED US YET, WARDEN.
MIDNIGHT. TIME TO GO. COMING, HORSEFACE?
gulp--YES.
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WHAT LUCK! NOT A GUARD IN SIGHT. BUT WHAT IF THE KEY DOESN'T WORK AT THE OTHER GATES?
Shhh--
8-4
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IT DOES! WE'RE AS GOOD AS OUT.
Shh, HORSEFACE. WE'VE A LONG WAY TO GO--
THERE THEY GO! I'LL BET THIS IS THE EASIEST JAIL 'BREAK' IN HISTORY.
I HOPE HE LEADS MANDRAKE--AND US--TO THE CROOKS WHO ARE MAKING MONKEYS OUT OF US!
PRADIP BANERJEE
AS MANDRAKE MAKES A JAIL 'BREAK' WITH HORSEFACE--
Shh--HE'S ASLEEP---
8-6
THAT SENTRY WAS ASLEEP, TOO-- THEY'RE ALL ASLEEP!
PRADIP BANERJEE
THERE'S A CAR! HOPE WE CAN GET IT STARTED!
SOMETHING WRONG HERE. THIS IS TOO EASY--


THE OWNER LEFT THE IGNITION KEY. WHAT A BREAK! HOP IN, HORSEFACE! SEE WHAT'S IN THAT SUITCASE IN THE BACK SEAT!
CLOTHES--
ANOTHER BREAK! WE CAN GET OUT OF THESE PRISON CLOTHES!
THEY'RE OFF! I'LL LOOK AWFULLY FOOLISH, LETTING A REAL PRISONER ESCAPE--IF MANDRAKE'S PLAN FAILS!
THAT'S THE CHANCE WE'RE TAKING, WARDEN.
8-7
SAY--SOMETHIN'S FUNNY ABOUT ALL THIS! TOO MANY BREAKS IN THIS 'BREAK'! IS THIS A PLOT? ARE YOU A STOOLIE?
PRADIP BANERJEE
YOU'RE SUSPICIOUS OF ME? I GOT YOU OUT, DIDN'T I?
YEAH--BUT--WHY? IT WAS ALL TOO EASY--LIKE IF THE COPS--ARRANGED IT--
THINK WHAT YOU WANT, HORSEFACE, YOU UNGRATEFUL----! HERE'S WHERE WE PART COMPANY. I'M GETTING OUT. YOU GO YOUR OWN WAY--


YOU-- LEAVIN' ME?
YES. YOU TAKE THE CAR. THEY'LL BE LOOKING FOR IT, ANYHOW. SO LONG.
HE'S GOIN'! I GUESS IT ALL WAS ON THE LEVEL!
HEY, YOU-- WAIT A MINUTE--
PRADIP BANERJEE
HEY, I HAD YOU WRONG. STICK WITH ME, PAL--
NOPE, I CAN TRAVEL FASTER ALONE--GOOD LUCK, HORSEFACE--
MANDRAKE GESTURES HYPNOTICALLY --HIS FIGURE-IMAGE SEEMS TO WALK AWAY--
SO LONG--
WHILE MANDRAKE HIMSELF, NOW INVISIBLE, CLIMBS INTO THE CAR--
HE WAS RIGHT. I CAN TRAVEL FASTER ALONE, TOO.


I HOPE THIS ISN'T A WILD-GOOSE CHASE--
INVISIBLE, MANDRAKE ACCOMPANIES HORSEFACE --
PRADIP BANERJEE
THIS CAR'S HOT. I'D BETTER DITCH IT HERE.
I'M COUNTING ON HIM TO LEAD ME TO THE MYSTERIOUS CRIME RING--
WHILE HE WAS IN JAIL, TEN ROBBERIES WERE COMMITTED BY A PERSON OR PERSONS WHO LOOKED JUST LIKE HIM--AND LEFT HIS FINGERPRINTS--
FUNNY--I'D SWEAR SOMEBODY ELSE WAS IN THIS FREIGHT CAR. I CAN HEAR BREATHIN'--
8-11
I MUST BE GETTIN' THE SHAKES. Huh --TIME FOR ME TO GET OFF--


Huh--I CAN HEAR FOOTSTEPS--BEHIND ME--BUT THERE AIN'T NOBODY--THERE! GOSH, I MUST BE NOIVOUS!
I ONLY HOPE HE'S LEADING ME TO THE CRIME RING--AND ISN'T JUST MAKING A GETAWAY!
Evening
CRIME WAVE BAFFLES POLI
FINGERPRINT
SAL, WE'RE DRIVIN' 'EM CRAZY! AND IMAGINE HORSEFACE, IN THE PEN, TRYIN' TO FIGURE THIS OUT!
VIC--YOU'D BETTER STOP--
8-13
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--WHILE YOU'RE AHEAD OF THE GAME!
STOP? WHEN I'VE INVENTED A FOOLPROOF METHOD? WE CAN RANSACK THIS STATE--AND THEY'LL NEVER CATCH US.
BEFORE I'M THROUGH, EVERY COP IN TOWN WILL TURN IN HIS BADGE AND RETIRE--TO KEEP FROM GOING HAYWIRE!
OKAY, MAESTRO. I WARNED YOU.
PRADIP BANERJEE


INVISIBLE MANDRAKE PURSUES HORSEFACE...
I STILL FEEL LIKE SOMEBODY'S FOLLOWIN' ME--BUT I CAN'T SEE NOBODY--
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HECK WITH IT--I'M JUST NOIVOUS! NO WONDER! BREAKIN' OUTA JAIL'S ENOUGH TO MAKE ANYBODY NOIVOUS!
NOW--I'LL FIND OUT IF THIS IS THE WISE GUY THAT PULLED ALL THOSE JOBS WHILE I WAS IN JAIL--AND BLAMED THEM ON ME!
WHAT DO THEY SEE?
MY--GOSH!
!
8-14
PRADIP BANERJEE
8-15
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TEN GUYS --ALL LOOK LIKE ME! EVEN--THE DAME!
THEY DO! ALL EXACTLY LIKE HORSEFACE!
BOYS, OUR LAST JOB WENT FINE! THE POLICE ARE HALF-CRAZY--AND, SO I IMAGINE, IS HORSEFACE, IN THE PEN!
Hahaha
8-16
WE'VE USED THAT POOR SAP'S UGLY FACE--WE DON'T NEED IT ANY MORE --TAKE 'EM OFF.
THAT'S A RELIEF. IF THERE'S ANY-BODY I DON'T WANT TO LOOK LIKE --IT'S HORSEFACE!
ME TOO!
THEY WERE WEARIN' --MASKS--THAT LOOKED LIKE ME! I--THOUGHT SO!
PLASTIC MASKS. BUT HOW DID THEY MAKE THEM?


GENTS, AS YOU KNOW, IT'S BEEN MY HOBBY TO MAKE LIFE MASKS OF MOST OF MY FRIENDS FOR YEARS.
MOST OF THEM WERE CROOKS LIKE HIM, TOO!
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I ALSO TOOK THEIR FINGERPRINTS. I THOUGHT THEY MIGHT COME IN HANDY SOMEDAY. THEY HAVE!
8-17
HE'S GOT **MY** FINGERPRINTS ON THOSE GLOVES!
SO THAT'S HOW IT ALL WORKS!
AS EACH OF MY 'FRIENDS' WENT TO JAIL, I MADE PLASTIC MASKS FROM THESE MOLDS-- ALSO PLASTIC GLOVES WITH THEIR FINGERPRINTS ON THEM--
PRADIP BANERJEE
8-18
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THEREBY CREATING PERFECT CRIME AND DRIVING THE COPS CRAZY--
VIC, DARLING, STOP BRAGGING. WE KNOW ALL THAT. GET ON WITH THE NEXT JOB!
SO THAT'S THE TRICK! WHY, THE DIRTY---!
AMAZING--HOW THE MOST BAFFLING MYSTERY BECOMES SO SIMPLE-- WHEN YOU KNOW HOW IT'S DONE!
THE PROBLEM IS, WHO SHALL WE USE NEXT AS A MODEL FOR OUR PLASTIC MASKS? NONE OF THESE IS RIGHT.
8-20
THEY MADE MASKS LIKE MY FACE-- AND PUT MY FINGERPRINTS ON GLOVES! SO I'D GET THE BLAME FOR ALL THEIR JOBS---
THEY CAN'T GET AWAY WITH THAT. I'LL SHOW THEM! WHAT THE--! OUCH --MY HEAD!
Umph-
THE INVISIBLE MANDRAKE'S CAUGHT BY SURPRISE AS HORSEFACE SUDDENLY JUMPS UP--
PRADIP BANERJEE


HORSEFACE'S HARD HEAD HITS INVISIBLE MANDRAKE'S JAW!
I--HIT MY HEAD--ON SOMETHIN'-- BUT NOTHIN'S THERE!
8-21
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Huh! SOMETHIN'--HIT THE GROUND --RIGHT THERE! BUT I CAN'T SEE --NOTHIN'!
WHAT THE--! IT'S THE GUY WHO BROKE OUTA THE PEN WITH ME. WHERE'D HE COME FROM?
IN A FLASH, THE HYPNOTIC SPELL IS BROKEN. THE UNCONSCIOUS MANDRAKE APPEARS SUDDENLY, AS IF OUT OF THIN AIR!
PRADIP BANERJEE
HELLO, HORSEFACE. WE DIDN'T KNOW YOU GOT OUT OF THE PEN.
SURE IS GOOD TO SEE YOU, HORSEFACE.
DON'T GIMME THAT! I'M ON TO YOU GUYS! USIN' MY FACE AND MY FINGERPRINTS FOR YOUR JOBS!
8-22
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SOUNDS LIKE YOU KNOW TOO MUCH! WHO'S THAT ON THE GROUND?
I DON'T KNOW HIS NAME. HE BROKE OUTA THE PEN WITH ME.
HE DID? I'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR A NEW MODEL FOR OUR NEXT JOB! HE'S IT! AN ESCAPED CONVICT! PERFECT!
YOU'RE GONNA MAKE MASKS FROM HIS FACE AND USE HIS FINGERPRINTS --LIKE YOU DID ME?
RIGHT. DID YOU SLUG HIM?
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NO. I DON'T KNOW WHAT HAPPENED. FIRST, I SEEN NOTHIN' --AND THEN, ALL OF A SUDDEN--
SKIP IT, HORSEFACE. NOW--HOW ABOUT YOU?
YOU KNOW TOO MUCH ABOUT OUR OPERATION. EITHER YOU JOIN US--OR--
THAT SURE GIVES ME A BIG CHOICE. OKAY, I'M WITH YOU.
PRADIP BANERJEE
TAKE HIM IN. GET HIM READY FOR THE MASK JOB. WHAT LUCK! AN ESCAPED CONVICT--


WATCH, HORSEFACE. YOU'LL SEE HOW I MAKE A MASK.
FIRST I PUT PLASTER ON HIS FACE --TO GET A MOLD. AS SOON AS IT HARDENS--
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I GREASE THE MOLD, THEN POUR PLASTER INTO IT. AFTER IT HARDENS, I BREAK OFF THE MOLD.
THE MASTER MASK IS COMPLETE --AND NOW I'M READY TO MAKE PLASTIC COPIES OF IT. ISN'T THAT PERFECT?
POIFECT!
PRADIP BANERJEE
NOW, HORSEFACE, I PUT THIS MASK OF YOUR 'PAL' INTO THE PLASTICS MACHINE -- MY OWN INVENTION--
8-25
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NOW I POUR IN SOME PLASTIC GLOP, TURN ON THE SWITCH, LET IT COOK, LET IT COOL--AND THEN--


I REMOVE THE FINISHED PLASTIC MASK, ADD A FALSE MUSTACHE TO IT--JUST LIKE YOUR 'PAL'S'--
--THEN PUT IT ON! HOW DO I LOOK?
CHEE-! YOU'RE A DEAD RINGER FOR HIM! POIFECT!
THIS MAKES A DOZEN PLASTIC MASKS. GIVE THEM TO THE BOYS TO TRY ON FOR SIZE!
VIC, IS IT SAFE TO USE THIS MAN'S FACE AND FINGERPRINTS? WE DON'T EVEN KNOW HIS NAME.
8-27
WHO CARES ABOUT HIS NAME, SAL? HE BROKE OUT OF JAIL WITH HORSEFACE. THE COPS ARE LOOKING FOR HIM. THAT'S ENOUGH!
POOR GUY-- HE'S STILL UNCONSCIOUS--
I'M THINKING WE'D BETTER LET HIM STAY THAT WAY-- FOR GOOD.


HERE, HORSEFACE. TRY THIS MASK ON FOR SIZE.
Chee-- FOR ME?
8-28
GOLLY--IT'S POIFECT! I LOOK JUST LIKE HIM!
WE'RE HAVING A MEETING. STAY WITH HIM-- WATCH HIM. IF HE WAKES UP--PUT HIM TO SLEEP AGAIN!
Uh--WHAT A WALLOP--HOW LONG --HAVE I BEEN OUT--?
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?! AM I SEEING THINGS?
PRADIP BANERJEE
WHAT IS THIS? AM I SEEING-- MYSELF?
WOKE UP, Huh? SORRY, PAL, VIC SAYS I GOTTA PUT YOU BACK TO 'SLEEP' AGAIN!
MANDRAKE GESTURES--HORSEFACE 'FREEZES'--UNABLE TO MOVE--
THE FACE IS MINE --BUT THE VOICE IS --HORSEFACE!
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YEP, HORSEFACE! I'LL BE DARNED! WHILE I WAS UNCONSCIOUS, THEY MADE PLASTIC MASKS OF ME!
AND GLOVES WITH MY FINGER-PRINTS ON THEM, TOO, NO DOUBT. I'VE GOT TO WORK FAST, BEFORE THEY TURN ME INTO A ONE-MAN CRIME WAVE!
WE'LL EXCHANGE CLOTHES, HORSE-FACE.
THE HYPNOTIZED HORSEFACE OBEYS STIFFLY—
8-30
NOW--LIE DOWN THERE--WHERE I WAS--AND SLEEP, HORSEFACE.
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NOW I'LL PUT YOUR PLASTIC MASK BACK ON--Hmm, AMAZING--IT MAKES HIM LOOK JUST LIKE ME.
HOW'S HE DOING, HORSEFACE?
I PUT HIM TO SLEEP, VIC, JUST LIKE YOU SAID!

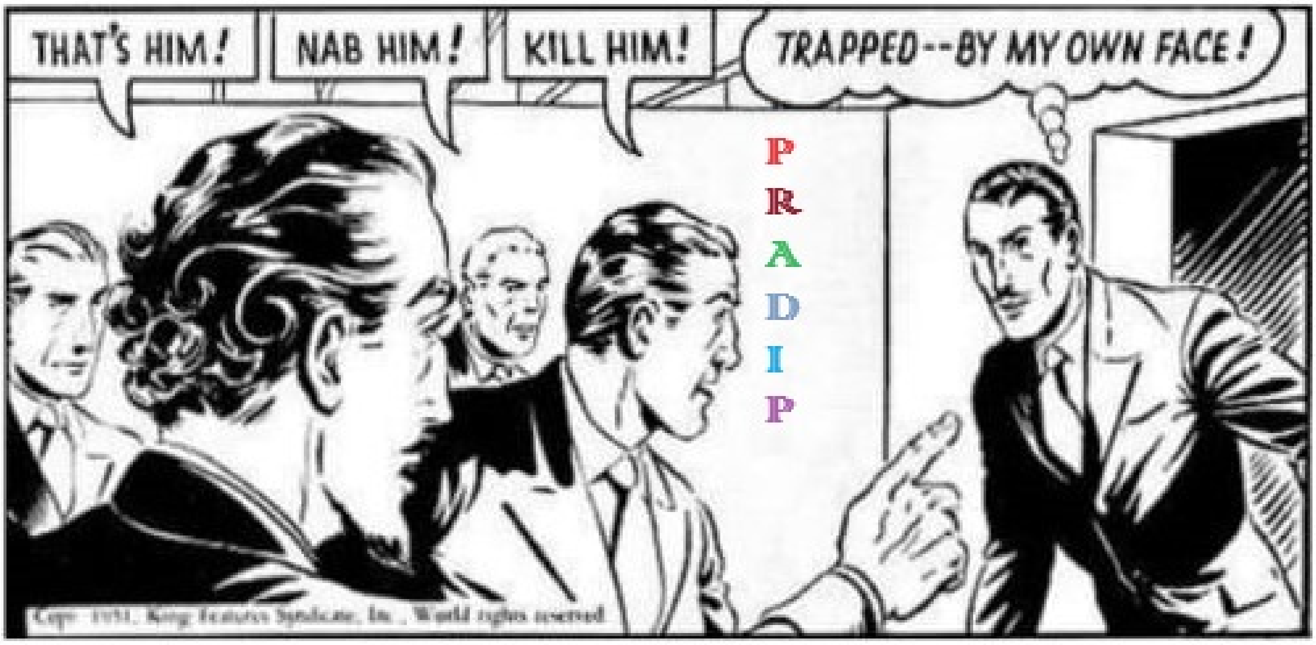

PRADIP BANERJEE
WE'RE READY TO PLAN OUR NEXT JOBS. EVERYBODY TRY ON THE NEW MASKS FOR SIZE. HAND OUT THE MASKS, SAL.
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MINE'S TOO BIG!
MINE'S TOO SMALL. LET'S TRADE.
I CAN LEAVE HORSEFACE SAFELY HYPNOTIZED HERE. I WANT TO SEE WHAT THEY'RE DOING--
Hmmm--
?
IS SOMETHING --WRONG?
WHERE DO YOU THINK YOU'RE GOING, HORSEFACE?
OH! I WAS GOING WITH THE OTHERS.
I THOUGHT SO! VIC SAID YOU WERE TO STAY HERE AND GUARD THAT GUY. SO STAY.
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GEE, VIC DID A GOOD JOB OF THESE MASKS. YOU LOOK JUST LIKE THAT GUY. YOU CAN'T TELL IT'S A MASK.
YES, IT'S SO GOOD I CAN HARDLY TELL THE DIFFERENCE, MYSELF. IT FEELS **ALMOST** REAL--LIKE MY OWN FACE!
PRADIP BANERJEE
ON SECOND THOUGHT, JOIN THE OTHERS, HORSEFACE. YOU'RE NEW. YOU'D BETTER LEARN WHAT GOES ON HERE. AND KEEP YOUR MASK ON.
THIS IS WEIRD. I'M SUPPOSED TO BE WEARING A MASK--OF MY OWN FACE!
9-3
PUT ON YOUR SUIT, BUD. WE ALL GOTTA DRESS ALIKE. YOU KNOW THAT! SAY--YOUR MASK SURE LOOKS REAL!
ANOTHER WEIRD SENSATION FOR MANDRAKE. A ROOMFUL OF MEN, ALL OF WHOM LOOK EXACTLY LIKE HIM!
YES, DOESN'T IT?


WE STRIKE TOMORROW NIGHT AT TEN, AT THESE DOZEN PLACES ALL OVER THE STATE--
HE LOOKS JUST LIKE ME IN THAT PLASTIC MASK--AND SO DO ALL THE REST OF THIS MOB! FUNNY, THEY THINK I'M WEARING A MASK, TOO--
PRADIP BANERJEE
GEE--IT'S AMAZING HOW VIC MADE THE MASKS SO EXACTLY LIKE THIS GUY'S FACE! TIME YOU WOKE UP-- **WAKE UP**--
WAKE UP--*Huh*--! **SAY**--THAT'S NOT HIS FACE! HE'S WEARING A MASK, TOO!
SLAP
9-4
WHY--IT'S NOT THE GUY AT ALL. IT'S HORSEFACE, WEARING A MASK! HE'S KNOCKED OUT, COLD!
9-5
AND THE GUY WHO WENT OUT OF HERE --WHO I **THOUGHT** WAS HORSE-FACE, WASN'T WEARING A MASK. IT WAS HIS REAL FACE!


VIC--THERE'S A SPY IN HERE! MAKE EVERYBODY UNMASK!
WHAT!
MANDRAKE
!
PRADIP BANERJEE
WHY SHOULD WE UNMASK, SAL?
BECAUSE THE GUY WHOSE FACE YOU COPIED FOR THIS MASK, IS IN THIS ROOM, WEARING HIS REAL FACE!
IF YOU ALL UNMASK, WE'LL FIND HIM--BECAUSE HE CAN'T TAKE OFF HIS REAL FACE!
RIGHT! EVERY-BODY UNMASK! NOBODY LEAVES THIS ROOM!
WITH TROUBLE AHEAD, MANDRAKE MOVES TOWARD THE DOOR--
GET AWAY FROM THAT DOOR--HE SAID NOBODY LEAVES!
I AIN'T TRYIN' TO LEAVE--


AS ALL THE THUGS REMOVE THEIR MANDRAKE MASKS--
EVERYBODY UNMASK! SNAP IT UP!
WHERE'S THE SPY--?
9-7


THAT'S HIM!
NAB HIM!
KILL HIM!
TRAPPED--BY MY OWN FACE!
PRADIP
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GOT YOU! YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE WHO COULDN'T UNMASK--BECAUSE IT'S YOUR REAL FACE!
MY REAL FACE? WHY, VIC, CAN'T YOU TAKE A JOKE? THIS ISN'T MY FACE--
9-8
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MANDRAKE GESTURES HYPNOTICALLY-
I'M WEARING A MASK, TOO --
YEAH-?
SEE?
!
PRADIP
VIC. WHY DID YOU LET HIM GO?
THAT WASN'T THE GUY, SAL. HE TOOK OFF HIS MASK. HE HAD A BEARD UNDER IT --
VIC--HE TOOK OFF NO MASK! AND NONE OF OUR GANG HAS A BEARD!
Huh --THAT'S RIGHT. IT WAS --A TRICK! AFTER HIM!
I'VE GOT TO WORK FAST. THERE'S A PHONE. I HOPE IT'S CONNECTED.
IT IS! OPERATOR --GIVE ME THE CHIEF OF POLICE --HURRY, HURRY --THIS IS AN EMERGENCY! MANDRAKE CALLING!
9-10


CHIEF, I'VE FOUND THE WHOLE GANG. I CAN ONLY SAY THIS ONCE. WHARF LANE, GRAY HOUSE-- HURRY!
9-11
HE WENT IN THERE AND LOCKED THE DOOR--
WE'LL UNLOCK IT!
HELLO, MANDRAKE--HELLO! HE HUNG UP--OR WAS CUT OFF--! LET'S GET MOVING!
PRADIP BANERJEE
SHOOT HIM, VIC!
HOW CAN YOU--WITH A TELEPHONE?
Huh!


SEE--I HAVE YOUR GUN.
?!?
9-12
NOW--PUT UP YOUR HANDS--AND DROP THE PHONE!
?
PRADIP BANERJEE
YOU SAPS--THAT'S NO GUN IN HIS HAND--IT'S A PHONE!
SO IT IS!
LIKE TO MAKE A CALL?
I HAVE TO GO NOW. DON'T BOTHER SEEING ME TO THE DOOR. I'LL GO THIS WAY.
Huh!
HE'S WALKING INTO THE WALL!
9-13


PRADIP BANERJEE
I'LL BE SEEING YOU--GOOD-BYE!
Huh--I KNOW WHO HE IS NOW! MANDRAKE THE MAGICIAN.
9-14
A FINE TIME TO FIND OUT! AND YOU WANTED TO USE HIS FACE FOR THE MASK.
HE CAN'T GET AWAY-- THE PLACE IS FULL OF OUR BOYS!
--AND SURROUNDED BY HIS BOYS. LOOK! COPS!
QUICK--OUT THE BACK DOOR!
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GOING SOMEPLACE?
Uh--I'M AFRAID SO. THE PEN---
VIC WAS AN ARTIST, CHIEF. HE MADE LIFE MASKS OF HIS CRIMINAL FRIENDS--ALSO TOOK THEIR FINGERPRINTS--THEN, WHEN THEY WERE IN JAIL--
--HE MADE PLASTIC MASKS OF ONE OF THEM--ALSO GLOVES WITH THEIR FINGERPRINTS.
NO WONDER THE GANG DROVE US CRAZY WHEN THEY USED THIS STUFF!



COVER DESIGN AND PDF BY:- PRADIP BANERJEE

